

stations may also participate in this radio service.

(p) *Public Correspondence.* Any telecommunication which the offices and stations must, by reason of their being at the disposal of the public, accept for transmission. This usually applies to maritime mobile and maritime mobile-satellite stations.

(q) *Recognized Operating Agencies (ROAs).*<sup>2</sup> Individuals, companies or corporations, other than governments or agencies, recognized by administrations, which operate telecommunications installations or provide telecommunications services intended for international use or which are capable of causing interference to international telecommunications. ROAs which settle debtor accounts for public correspondence in the maritime mobile and maritime mobile-satellite radio services must be certified as accounting authorities.

(r) *Ship Station.* A mobile station in the maritime mobile service located on board a vessel which is not permanently moored, other than a survival craft station.

(s) *Special Drawing Right (SDR).* A monetary unit of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) currently based on a market basket of exchange rates for the United States, West Germany, Great Britain, France and Japan but is subject to IMF's definition. One of the monetary units used to effect accounting settlements in the maritime mobile and maritime mobile-satellite services.

(t) *United States.* The continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands or any territory or possession of the United States.

#### ELIGIBILITY

##### § 3.10 Basic qualifications.

(a) Applicants must meet the requirements and conditions contained in these rules in order to be certified as an accounting authority. No individual or other entity, including accounting authorities approved by other administrations, may act as a United States accounting authority and settle accounts of U.S. licensed vessels in the

maritime mobile or maritime mobile-satellite services without a certification from the Federal Communications Commission. Accounting authorities with interim certification as of the effective date of this rule must submit to the application process discussed in § 3.20. They will be "grandfathered", i.e. granted permanent certification provided they demonstrate their eligibility and present a proper application.

(b) U.S. citizenship is not required of individuals in order to receive certification from the Commission to be an accounting authority. Likewise, joint ventures need not be organized under the laws of the United States in order to be eligible to perform settlements for U.S. licensed vessels. See, however, § 3.11.

(c) Prior experience in maritime accounting, general commercial accounting, international shipping or any other related endeavor will be taken into consideration by the Commission in certifying accounting authorities. The lack of such expertise, however, will not automatically disqualify an individual, partnership, corporation or other entity from becoming an accounting authority.

(d) Applicants must provide formal financial statements or documentation proving all assets, liabilities, income and expenses.

(e) Applicants must offer their services to any member of the public making a reasonable request therefor, without undue discrimination against any customer or class of customer, and fees charged for providing such services shall be reasonable and non-discriminatory. This requirement will be waived for applicants who settle their own accounts *only* and are eligible to be "grandfathered" during the initial application period. However, should the need for additional accounting authorities be proven, these accounting authorities will be required to offer their services to the public or relinquish their certification.

[61 FR 20165, May 6, 1996, as amended at 64 FR 40776, July 28, 1999]

<sup>2</sup>Id.